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PARIS FOR USOECD

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SUBJECT: OECD - EXPORT CREDITS; BRIBERY WORKING GROUP

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11. (U) As instructed, EconOff delivered reftel demarche November 15 to Roberto Pecoraio, Director of the Legal Department for SACE, Italy's Export Credit Agency. Pecoraio said in general Italy supported the OECD Secretariat's proposed Action Statement on Measures to Deter Bribery (in granting export credits), but needed to work out additional details on the statement's legal wording. He welcomed coordination with the United States.

12. (U) Acting Minister Counselor also discussed reftel points with MFA Deputy Director General Massimo Leggeri November 19, who expressed support for a strengthened Action Statement, but repeated SACE's concern on legal wording.

13. (U) DCM then delivered reftel demarche to Ministry of Justice (MOJ) Under Secretary Pasquale Guiliano December 20. While Guiliano did not respond to DCM's points, he took the opportunity to express the GOI's strong displeasure on the alleged failure of the United States to support the GOI candidate for the Vice-Chair of the OECD Working Group on Bribery in International Business Transactions (WG). Guiliano continued at length to vent his anger and asked the DCM to convey the GOI's view to the Ambassador. The DCM replied that the Ambassador had met with Justice Minister Castelli November 15, but the Minister had not broached the subject. Guiliano responded tersely by observing that good relations are defined by helping one another achieve one's goals.

14. (U) DCM, in an effort to introduce a positive note, then raised the February 2006 second Italy-U.S. peer evaluation of Japan's anti-bribery practices (since the WG could not reach a consensus on the first report in 2005.) She noted the second peer evaluation is an opportunity for Italy and the United States to continue their cooperation on WG matters. Guiliano replied that Maria Rosaria Marino, a magistrate, will be part of the Italian team, although no decision has been made yet on other members. Giuliano said Marino speaks excellent English.

15. (U) COMMENT: The Guiliano meeting took place more than a month after we asked to meet with the MOJ. The delay was most likely a signal of the MOJ's continuing spleen over its perception that the United States did not declare support for Italy's candidate for the WG Vice-Chair early enough to make a difference. (We heard the same charge during our MFA call.) Given the continuing rancor, we suggest looking closely at options to smooth ruffled feathers to avoid a meltdown on future U.S.- Italian initiatives on WG goals. End comment.  
SPOGLI